SQUADRON SUPREME® 9

SQUADRON SUPREME

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WARRIOR WOMAN

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SQUADRON SUPREME

REFUGEES FROM DEAD EARTHS, THE SQUADRON SUPREME IS A NEW KIND OF SUPER-TEAM THAT ARE LOOKING TO PROTECT THE WORLD--AT ANY COST. AN EXAMPLE OF THIS BEING THE DESTRUCTION OF ATLANTIS AND THE EXECUTION OF NAMOR, THE SUB-MARINER.

RECENTLY, DURING AN ACT OF BETRAYAL, THEIR TEAMMATE POWER PRINCESS REVEALED THAT SHE WAS ACTUALLY THE NEFARIOUS WARRIOR WOMAN FROM THE SQUADRON SINISTER. LEAVING THE SQUADRON SUPREME SHE HAS SINCE WORKED IN SECRET WITH THE MYRIAD, AN ARMY COMPRISING DIFFERENT ALIEN RACES. HER NEW GOAL? TO PROTECT THE WORLD BY RULING IT.

MEANWHILE, THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW INHUMAN WITH THE POWER TO FORETELL THE FUTURE HAS FORCED EARTH'S GREATEST CHAMPIONS TO MAKE A CHOICE: PROTECT THE FUTURE? OR CHANGE THE FUTURE?

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ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A BEAUTIFUL PRINCESS...
...WHO CHOSE TO BECOME A QUEEN.

THE LAND SHE CHOSE TO RULE WELCOMED HER WITH *OPEN ARMS.*

OH, HOW THEY *SANG*...OH, HOW THEY *CHEERED*...ON THAT GREAT, GRAND DAY WHEN THE PRINCESS FIRST PLACED HER DAINTY FEET UPON THEIR COBBLESTONE LANES AND BYROADS.

INDEED, THOSE LANES THEMSELVES WOULD HAVE *SMILED* IF THEY BUT COULD.

FOR THEY WERE OF OLD STONE AND HARRIED, BROKEN SHINGLE...

...YET WITH A WAVE OF HER HAND, LO, ENCHANTMENT FELL UPON THE LAND AND IT GREW RESPLENDENT SKYWARD.

FROM A SAD, TIRED SHIRE TO A REALM MOST *WONDROUS.*

HOW THE PEOPLE *CHEERED*...

...APART FROM THOSE WHO *DIDN'T.*

AND SO IT WAS.

THE QUEEN GAZED DOWN FROM HER CASTLE HIGH. CONTENT.

ZARDA.

MODRED.

YOU WERE DEEP IN THOUGHT--I CAN COME BACK.

NO, I WAS MERELY...

...REFLECTING. ON EVERYTHING--ALL I'VE *ACHIEVED.* HOW I'LL BE REMEMBERED.

YES, WELL, HISTORY OFTEN APPLIES A FRESH COAT OF PAINT TO THE TRUTH BEFORE IT FACES THE SUN.

HA, YOU AND YOUR METAPHORS.

I ENJOY WORDS, WHAT CAN I SAY.

AND AS FOR HISTORY'S EYES--I COULDN'T CARE LESS.

THE SIMPLE TRUTH IS I WON THE *LOYALTY* OF THE *MYRIAD*--

"WON"? YOU *WON* THEIR LOYALTY?

FINE, I TOOK IT, ALL THANKS TO YOUR MAGIC, MODRED. THAT AND THE COMBINED SCIENCE OF ALL THOSE ALIEN RACES CONQUERED THIS COUNTRY IN LITTLE MORE THAN A DAY.

AND HERE WE ARE.

"A GIFT" FROM DOCTOR DRUID IN RETURN FOR MY BEING HIS AGENT HERE ON EARTH.

IN FACT, DRUID MIRRORED ITS ENERGY FREQUENCY TO CREATE THE IMMENSE JEWEL THAT HE USED TO ENSLAVE WEIRDWORLD.

MY "MAGIC" HAS A NAME, BY THE WAY, ZARDA. ***THE EYE OF XOT.*** IT HAS BEEN USED BY MANY RULERS AND DESPOTS THROUGHOUT TIME TO "WIN" A POPULACE'S LOVE OR OBEDIENCE.

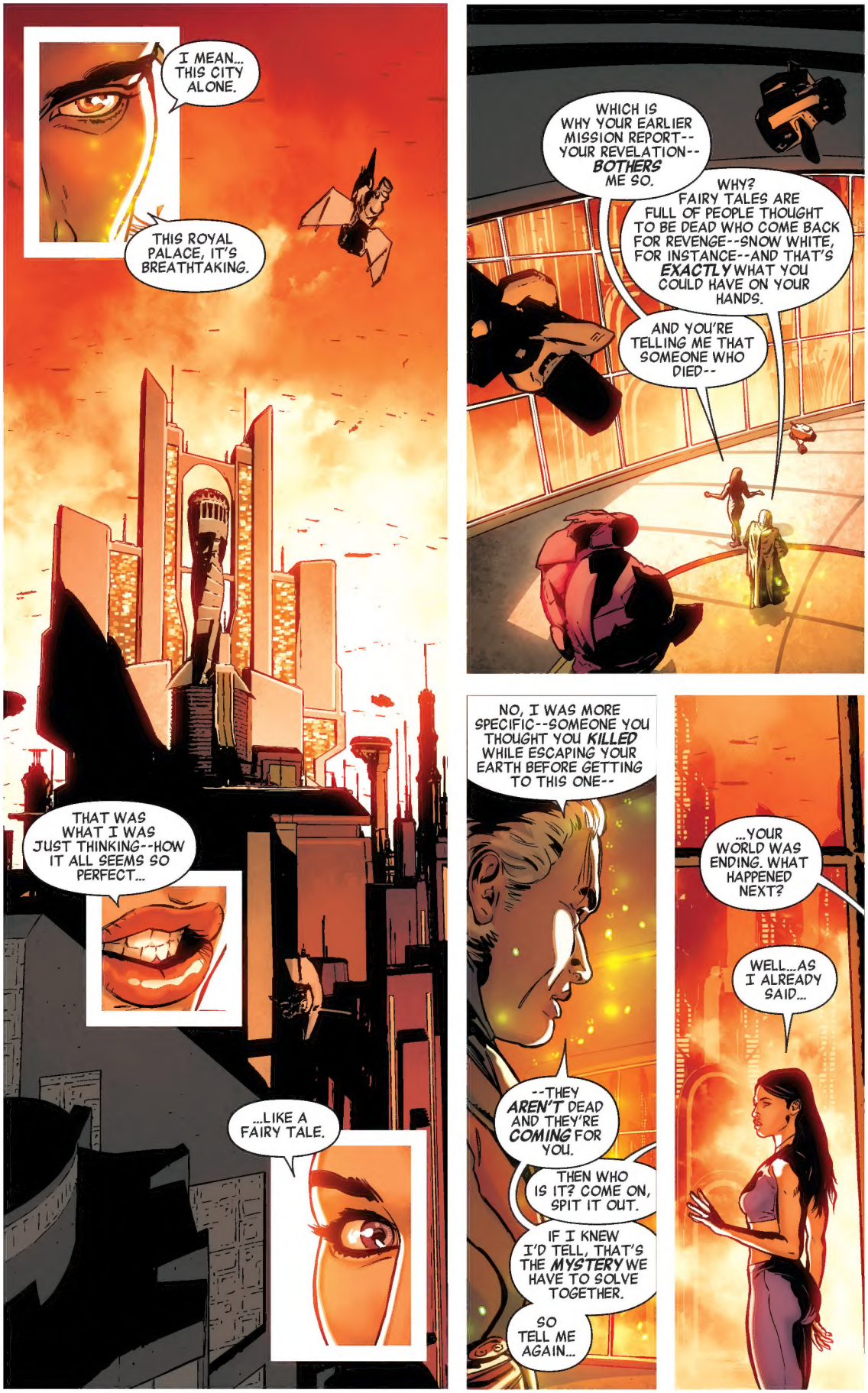
AND WE USED IT TO CONTROL THE MYRIAD.

CHANGING THEM FROM A CRIMINAL ENTERPRISE BENT ON *PROFIT* INTO AN *ARMY* BENT ON *CONQUEST*...

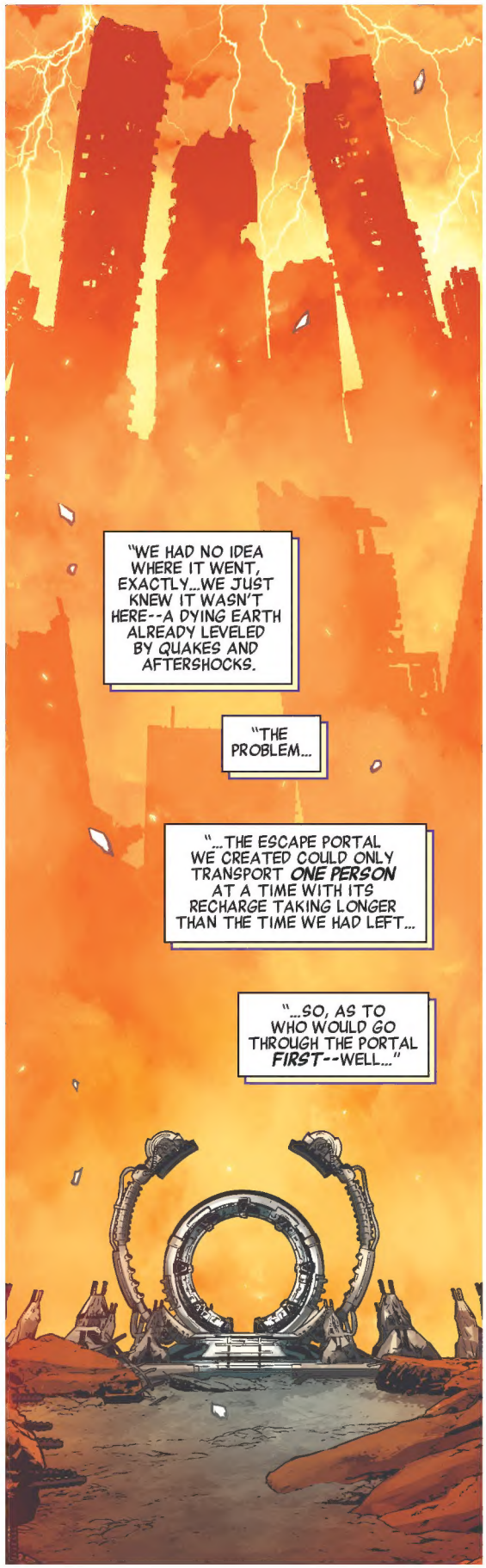
...IN *MY* NAME.

WE THEN CONQUERED THE COUNTRY OF *ALAMBRA* USING THE COMBINATION OF WARRIORS' MIGHT AND ALIEN WEAPONRY--

--AND SUBSEQUENTLY TERRAFORMED THIS RELATIVELY *PRIMITIVE* COUNTRY INTO A *TECHNOLOGICAL WONDERLAND.*


I MEAN... THIS CITY ALONE.
THIS ROYAL PALACE, IT'S BREATHTAKING.
THAT WAS WHAT I WAS JUST THINKING--HOW IT ALL SEEMS SO PERFECT...
...LIKE A FAIRY TALE.
WHICH IS WHY YOUR EARLIER MISSION REPORT--YOUR REVELATION--BOTHERS ME SO.
WHY? FAIRY TALES ARE FULL OF PEOPLE THOUGHT TO BE DEAD WHO COME BACK FOR REVENGE--SNOW WHITE, FOR INSTANCE--AND THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU COULD HAVE ON YOUR HANDS.
AND YOU'RE TELLING ME THAT SOMEONE WHO DIED--
NO, I WAS MORE SPECIFIC--SOMEONE YOU THOUGHT YOU KILLED WHILE ESCAPING YOUR EARTH BEFORE GETTING TO THIS ONE--
--THEY AREN'T DEAD AND THEY'RE COMING FOR YOU.
THEN WHO IS IT? COME ON, SPIT IT OUT.
IF I KNEW I'D TELL, THAT'S THE MYSTERY WE HAVE TO SOLVE TOGETHER.
SO TELL ME AGAIN...
...YOUR WORLD WAS ENDING. WHAT HAPPENED NEXT?
WELL...AS I ALREADY SAID...

"YES, MODRED, OUR WORLD WAS ENDING--SOMEHOW--WE NEVER DID ASCERTAIN THE CAUSE.
"AND NONE OF OUR POWERS OR SCIENCE OR MAGIC COULD DO A THING ABOUT IT.
"THE BEST THAT I AND MY COMPATRIOTS IN THE SQUADRON SINISTER COULD DO WAS POOL OUR TALENTS TO CREATE A PORTAL 'ELSEWHERE.'


"WE HAD NO IDEA WHERE IT WENT, EXACTLY...WE JUST KNEW IT WASN'T HERE--A DYING EARTH ALREADY LEVELED BY QUAKES AND AFTERSHOCKS.
"THE PROBLEM...
"...THE ESCAPE PORTAL WE CREATED COULD ONLY TRANSPORT ONE PERSON AT A TIME WITH ITS RECHARGE TAKING LONGER THAN THE TIME WE HAD LEFT...
"...SO, AS TO WHO WOULD GO THROUGH THE PORTAL FIRST--WELL..."

"...THAT DEBATE QUICKLY BECAME QUITE *HEATED.*"
DID YOU EVER THINK IT WOULD COME TO THAT--
--*KILLING* YOUR TEAMMATES?
OH, I FULLY *EXPECTED* IT. EVEN ON A GOOD DAY WE WERE *HARDLY* THE MOST LOYAL OF TEAMS.
AND *THIS* WAS *NOT* A GOOD DAY.
"THE THING I HAD TO MY ADVANTAGE IS--WELL..."
...I WAS A *WOMAN.*
THEY *UNDERESTIMATED* THE EXTENT OF MY ABILITIES AND RAW POWER.
IDIOTS, ALL OF THEM--IT'S NOT LIKE THEY HADN'T SEEN ME IN COMBAT ENOUGH TIMES.

"YES, IDIOTS.
"EVEN HYPERION.
"AND THERE WAS MY EDGE.
"I'D LIKE TO SAY I STEPPED INTO THE PORTAL WITH A TINGE OF REGRET AT MY FALLEN COMRADES.
"PERHAPS THAT I TURNED BACK FOR A FINAL LOOK OR THAT A SINGLE TEAR FORMED IN MY EYE.
"BUT I'D BE LYING.
"NO, BY THE TIME I STEPPED THROUGH...
"...I'D FORGOTTEN THEM ALL."

AND THAT WAS IT. THAT--
--OH, WAIT, NO, OF COURSE THAT WASN'T IT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I FORGOT-- THERE WAS ONE OTHER SOUL WHO PAID THE PRICE THAT I MIGHT LIVE.
HOW COULD YOU FORGET SOMETHING LIKE THAT?
AND WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "THE PRICE"?
BASICALLY...
"...THE PORTAL SENT ME INTO SOME SORT OF VOID BETWEEN MY EARTH AND THIS ONE...
"...IT WAS A STORM AND A VACUUM AND A RIPTIDE ALL AT THE SAME TIME.
"AND I WAS SO TIRED.
"BUT.
"THEN..."
SISTER!

I'M NO ONE'S SISTER, WHO IN HADES ARE YOU?!
MY NAME IS POWER PRINCESS.
I'M THE LAST OF MY EARTH--THE LAST OF MY TEAM, TOO...
...THE SQUADRON SUPREME.
"AND KNEW IMMEDIATELY HOW I COULD PLAY ON IT."
YES...OUR FATES ENTWINED--"SISTERS" FROM DIFFERENT EARTHS BUT THE SAME TEAM...
...THE SQUADRON SUPREME.
"SHE WAS RIGHT. LIKE A MIRROR--DISTORTED, BUT STILL ME IN SO MANY WAYS.
"I SAW AN HONESTY IN HER FACE. A TRUTH.
HERE, I'M WEAKENING... CAN YOU HELP ME?
YES, TAKE MY HAND, I'VE STRENGTH ENOUGH FOR BOTH OF US, SISTER.

THAT'S WHAT I'M HOPING!
"IT TOOK HER MOMENTS TO DIE..."
"...EVEN WITH HER STRENGTH ADDED TO MINE, IT STILL TOOK WHAT FELT LIKE FOREVER TO REACH THIS EARTH AND BEGIN MY LIFE...
"...AS 'POWER PRINCESS.'
"...SOMEONE THE NEWLY FORMED SQUADRON SUPREME COULD TRUST...
"...UNTIL THE TIME IT NO LONGER MATTERED IF THEY DID..."

NOW, ENOUGH OF THIS, MODRED, I SENT YOU IN SEARCH OF THE FUTURE, I'M DONE WITH THE PAST--I EXPECTED REVELATIONS FROM YOU, NOT FURTHER INQUIRY.
AND I'VE MUCH TO TELL YOU...BUT YOUR FUTURE IS TIED TO YOUR PAST--AT LEAST IN TERMS OF THOSE YOU KILLED TO GET HERE.
WHAT IN GOD'S NAME ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
I DON'T KNOW WHY I EXPECTED PATIENCE FROM YOU...IT'S A TRAIT RARE IN YOUR KIND.
MY KIND?
RULERS, REIVERS, CONQUERORS.
CAREFUL HOW YOU TALK TO ME, MAGE--YOU'RE AN ADVISOR, AN AIDE--
NOW, NOW, ZARDA, UNCLENCH THOSE FISTS. IT'S NOT A CRITICISM, JUST AN OBSERVATION.
I KEEP YOU AROUND FOR TWO REASONS ONLY, MODRED--YOUR MAGICAL ABILITIES...
...AND HOW I MIGHT USE THAT MAGIC FOR TASKS SUCH AS THE ONE I BID YOU UNDERTAKE.
AND IT'S VERY NICE TO FEEL WANTED.
AS YOU BID, I WENT TO THE PLACE WHERE CURRENTLY THE "FUTURE" IS THERE FOR THE TAKING--

"--NEW ATTILAN.

"HOME OF THE *INHUMANS.*

"NESTLED ON THE HUDSON RIVER...

"...A UNIQUE PLACE, TO BE SURE--ITS INHABITANTS NO LESS UNIQUE."

"I DON'T NEED A GUIDED TOUR, MODRED. WHAT DID YOU LEARN?"

"VERY WELL...

"...USING AN ANCIENT GLAMOUR...

"...I WAS ABLE TO WALK AMONG THEM--

"--TAKING GUISE AFTER GUISE AS NEEDED.

"IT TOOK ME A WHILE TO FIND WHERE THEY'D *HIDDEN* HIM...

"...THE INHUMAN SEER KNOWN AS *ULYSSES.*

"YOUNGER THAN I EXPECTED...

"...ALTHOUGH YOUNG ISN'T A *BAD* THING WHEN YOU CAST A SPELL TO CONTROL SOMEONE.

"THE YOUNGER THE *BETTER,* IN FACT.

"I MADE HIM SPEAK...I MADE HIM *SEE...*

"AND I MADE HIM *TELL ME* WHAT HE SAW..."

"...WHAT THE FUTURE HELD FOR YOU, ME...AND *THE WORLD...*

"...RULED BY YOU AND YOUR *MYRIAD ARMY...*

"...ABETTED BY THE ATLANTEANS WHOSE GREAT NUMBERS AND MIGHT HELPED MAKE EARTH'S DEFENSES AND ITS HEROES *FALL.*

"THERE ARE TWO GRAVE IMPEDIMENTS TO THIS FUTURE COMING TO PASS...

"...FIRSTLY, YOUR REGENT AND *PARTNER* IN CONQUEST...

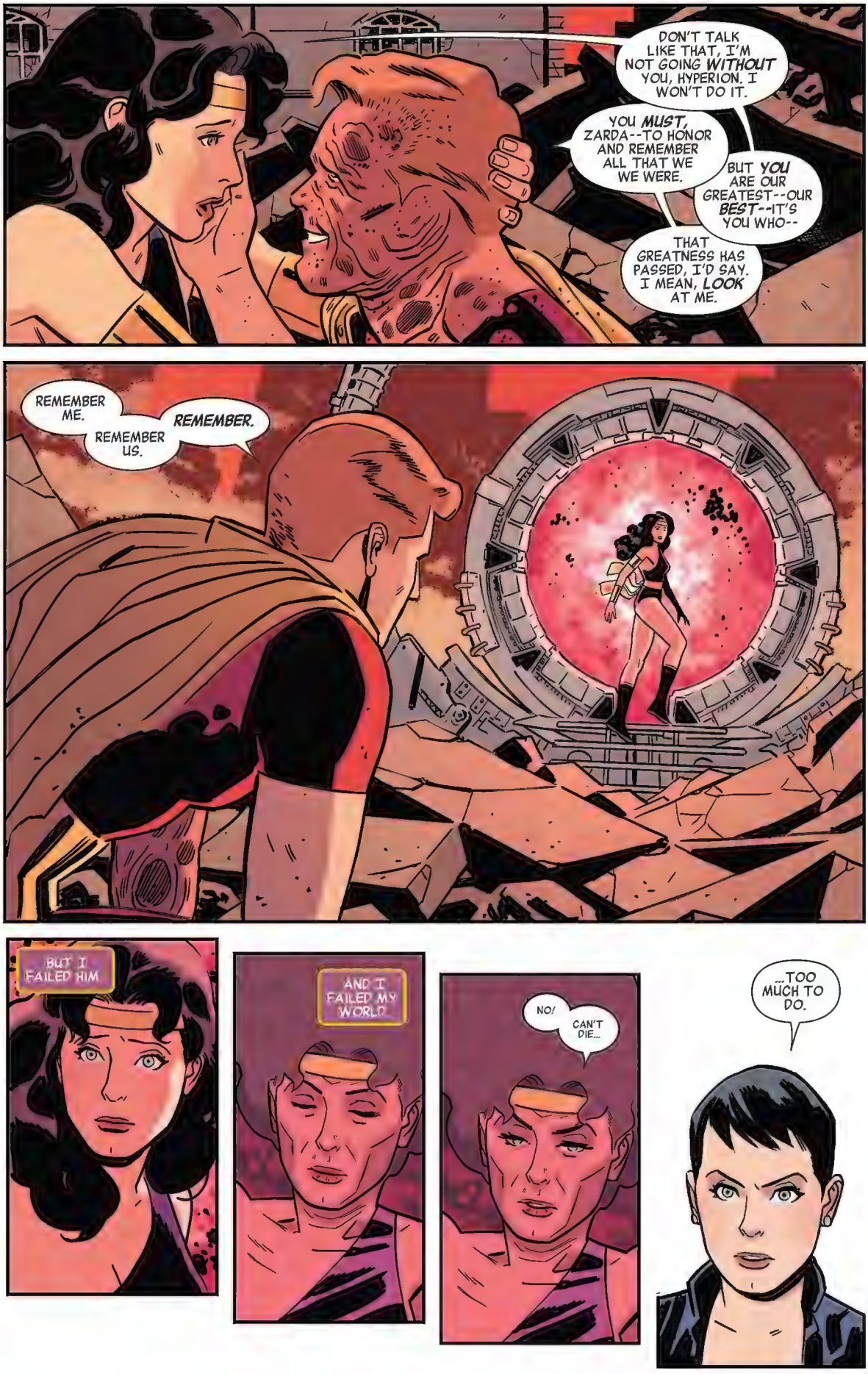
"...IS *NAMOR, PRINCE OF ATLANTIS.*"

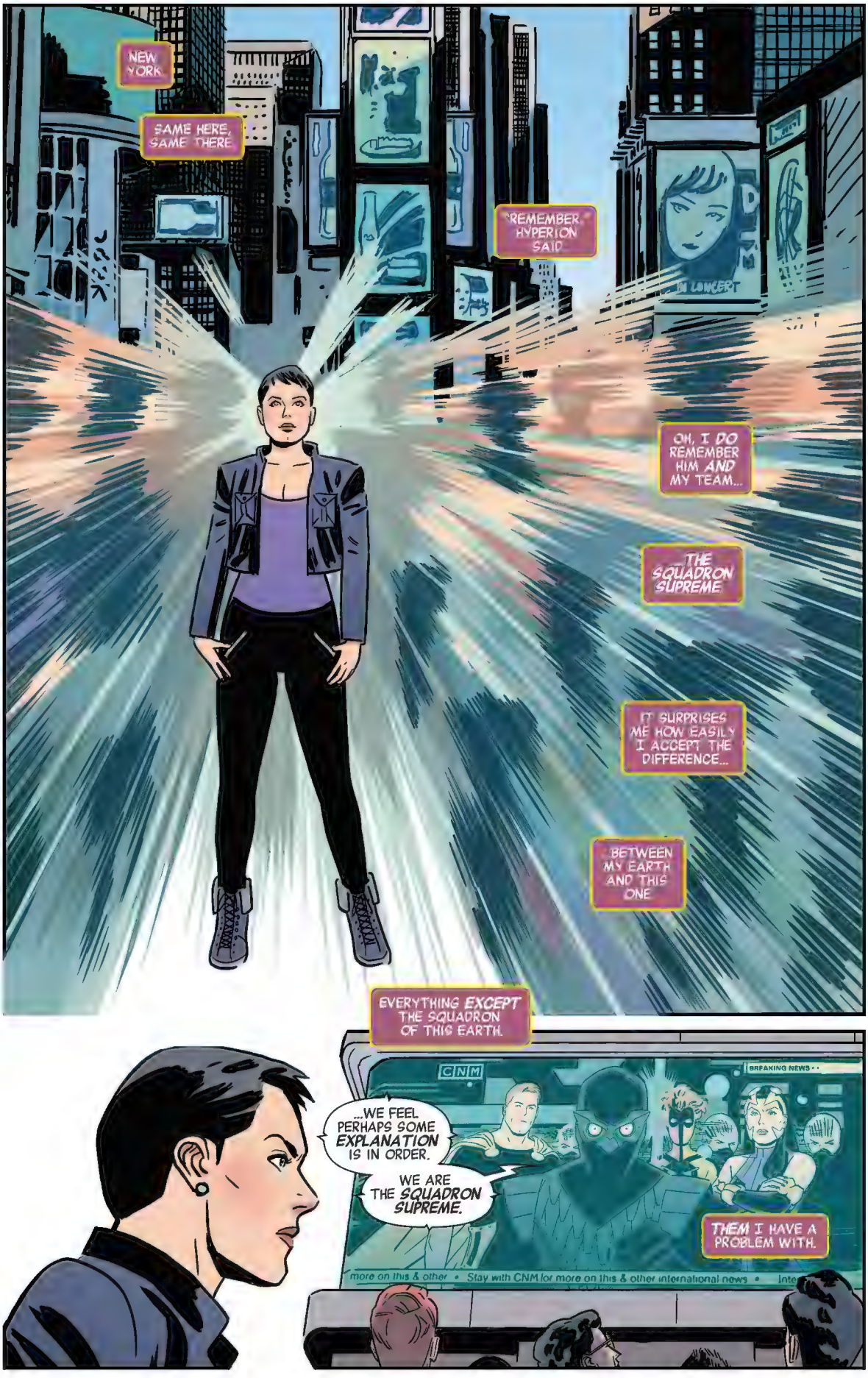
HMM.
THEN WE'LL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING, ABOUT MAKING HIM "NOT DEAD."
YES, I'D BE A FOOL NOT TO ADMIT IT'S A CHALLENGE...
...BUT LOOKING AT THIS NEW WORLD--CATALOGING ITS SUPER HEROES--I NOTE THAT THE LIST OF THOSE WHO'VE RETURNED FROM THE GRAVE IS A LONG ONE.
I SEE NO REASON WHY NAMOR CANNOT BE ADDED TO IT.
YOU MAY HAVE SOMETHING THERE.
WHAT'S THE SECOND COMPLICATION? YOU SAID THERE WERE TWO.
WELL, YES, AS WE DISCUSSED, SOMEONE "DEAD" FROM YOUR PAST--
--THE SEER COULDN'T GET A CLEAR VIEW--HE COULDN'T TELL ME EXACTLY WHO...
...BUT SOMEONE YOU KILLED WHEN YOU ESCAPED YOUR EARTH'S FATE WILL SOMEHOW MAKE THEIR RETURN...

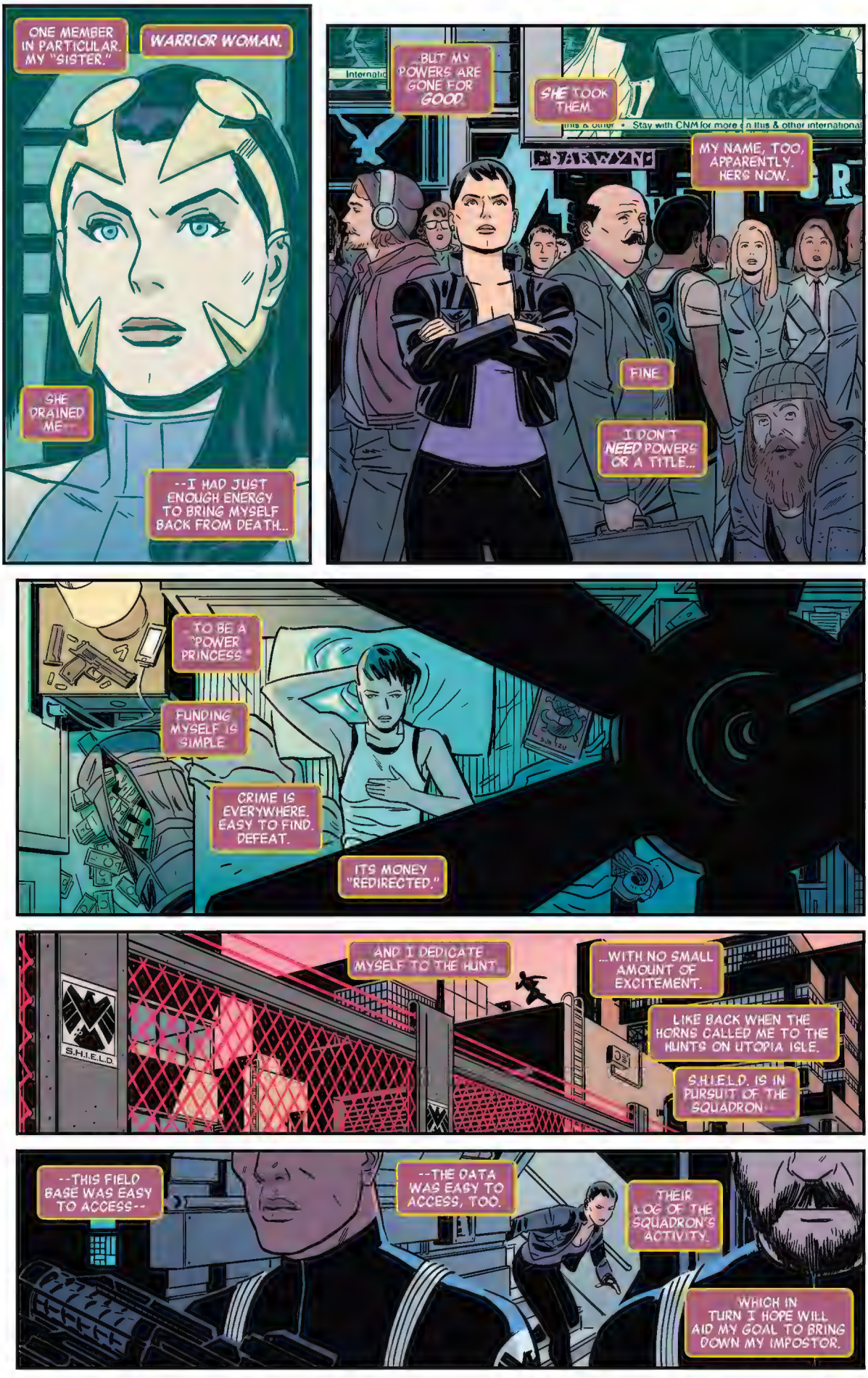
...AND THEY WILL TRY TO STOP YOU.
AS YES, YOU SAY, THE LIST OF THOSE WHO'VE RETURNED FROM THE GRAVE IS A LONG ONE.
I MUST BRING ONE PERSON BACK TO LIFE WHILE MAKING SURE ANOTHER STAYS DEAD.
THAT'S THE THING, ZARDA, FROM WHAT THE PROFILER COULD SEE--
--YOUR ENEMY IS ALREADY ALIVE...

"...AND THEY'RE COMING."
SISTER
MY ABILITIES ARE GONE FOREVER
BUT I DON'T NEED THEM TO GO TO WAR WITH YOU, "WARRIOR WOMAN."
I DON'T NEED POWERS TO BE A "POWER PRINCESS."
NEXT: FINDING NAMOR.

THERE IS A VOID BETWEEN ONE EARTH AND ANOTHER...
JUST THE TWO OF US--CAN'T BELIEVE HOW QUICKLY THE REST OF THE SQUADRON FELL. IT'S--
WE ONLY HAVE TIME FOR ONE TO GO THROUGH THE PORTAL BEFORE OUR WORLD IS DONE.
AND ZARDA, THAT ONE IS YOU.
AND IN THAT PLACE I REST--A DEAD THING


DON'T TALK LIKE THAT, I'M NOT GOING WITHOUT YOU, HYPERION. I WON'T DO IT.
YOU MUST, ZARDA--TO HONOR AND REMEMBER ALL THAT WE WE WERE.
BUT YOU ARE OUR GREATEST--OUR BEST--IT'S YOU WHO--
THAT GREATNESS HAS PASSED, I'D SAY. I MEAN, LOOK AT ME.
REMEMBER ME.
REMEMBER US.
REMEMBER.
BUT I FAILED HIM
AND I FAILED MY WORLD
NO!
CAN'T DIE...
...TOO MUCH TO DO.

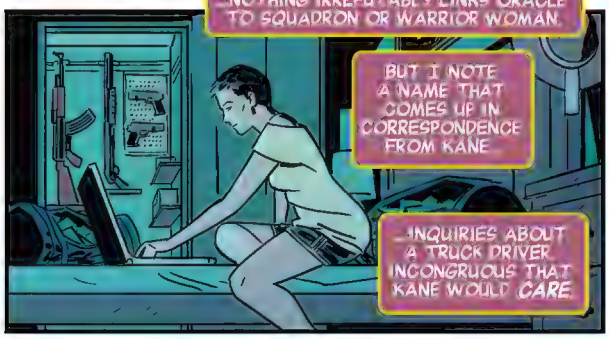

NEW YORK
SAME HERE, SAME THERE
REMEMBER HYPERION SAID
IN CONCERT
OH, I DO REMEMBER HIM AND MY TEAM...
THE SQUADRON SUPREME
IT SURPRISES ME HOW EASILY I ACCEPT THE DIFFERENCE...
BETWEEN MY EARTH AND THIS ONE
EVERYTHING EXCEPT THE SQUADRON OF THIS EARTH.
CNM
BREAKING NEWS
...WE FEEL PERHAPS SOME EXPLANATION IS IN ORDER.
WE ARE THE SQUADRON SUPREME.
THEM I HAVE A PROBLEM WITH.
more on this & other • Stay with CNM for more on this & other international news •

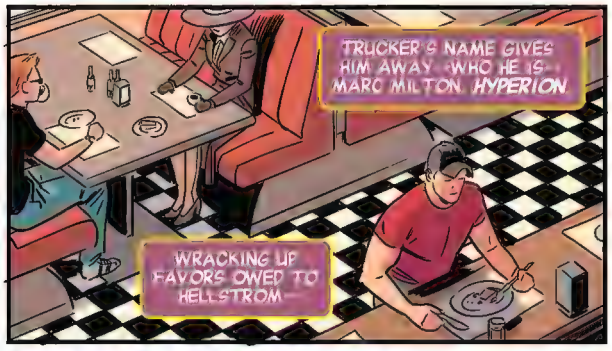

ONE MEMBER IN PARTICULAR. MY "SISTER."
WARRIOR WOMAN.
SHE DRAINED ME--
--I HAD JUST ENOUGH ENERGY TO BRING MYSELF BACK FROM DEATH...
...BUT MY POWERS ARE GONE FOR GOOD.
SHE TOOK THEM.
MY NAME, TOO, APPARENTLY. HERS NOW.
FINE.
I DON'T NEED POWERS OR A TITLE...
--TO BE A "POWER PRINCESS."
FUNDING MYSELF IS SIMPLE.
CRIME IS EVERYWHERE. EASY TO FIND. DEFEAT.
ITS MONEY "REDIRECTED."
AND I DEDICATE MYSELF TO THE HUNT...
...WITH NO SMALL AMOUNT OF EXCITEMENT.
LIKE BACK WHEN THE HORNS CALLED ME TO THE HUNTS ON UTOPIA ISLE.
S.H.I.E.L.D. IS IN PURSUIT OF THE SQUADRON.
S.H.I.E.L.D.
--THIS FIELD BASE WAS EASY TO ACCESS--
--THE DATA WAS EASY TO ACCESS, TOO.
THEIR LOG OF THE SQUADRON'S ACTIVITY.
WHICH IN TURN I HOPE WILL AID MY GOAL TO BRING DOWN MY IMPOSTOR.

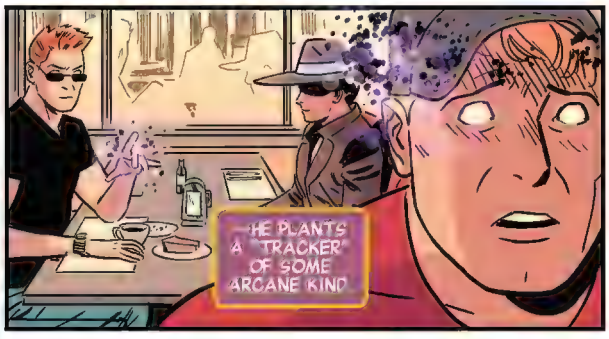
I USE S.H.I.E.L.D.'S INTEL--FOLLOW THE TRAIL.
NIGHTHAWK IS ONTO SOMETHING--
--THEY ATTACK A BASE IN GALVESTON, TEXAS
IT'S A RUIN--
--YET AN ALIEN IS STILL HERE GUARDING IT.
IT'S WHEN I INTERROGATE HIM THAT I FIRST HEAR A NAME--
--THE MYRIAD.
AFTER GALVESTON, THE SQUADRON WENT SOMEWHERE "A LITTLE FARTHER AWAY"...
...AND I NEED MAGIC TO FOLLOW THE TRAIL THERE.
I STRIKE A DEAL WITH A MAN NAMED HELLSTROM. SLEAZY MAN.
SAYS I'LL OWE HIM A FAVOR.
TAKES ME KNOCKING HIM OUT...
TWICE.
...BEFORE HE UNDERSTANDS WHAT "OWING HIM A FAVOR" DOESN'T INCLUDE.
HE MOANS ABOUT HOW MUCH THE DENTAL WORK WILL COST HIM.
NEVERTHELESS, HE LIVES UP TO HIS END OF THE DEAL...
...AND TAKES ME TO WEIRDWORLD.
I QUESTION A DWELLER THERE--TYNDALL...
...HE TELLS ME THAT "POWER PRINCESS" HAS SHOWN HER TRUE SIDE--
--REVEALED HER TRUE NAME, TOO...
...WARRIOR WOMAN.
WE ALSO DISCOVER HYPERION'S VULNERABILITY TO MAGIC.

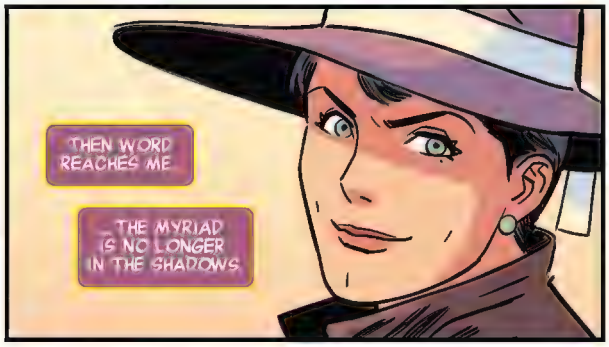
THE INVESTIGATION LEADS ME BACK TO ORACLE, INC IN NEW YORK
CAN'T BE A COINCIDENCE THAT IT SPRANG BACK TO LIFE...
...IN THE WAKE OF NAMOR'S DEATH
ITS NEW C.E.O. IS RAYMOND KANE WHOSE PHYSIQUE I NOTE IS A PERFECT MATCH FOR NIGHTHAWK

I ACCESS COMPANY RECORDS


...NOTHING IRREFUTABLY LINKS ORACLE TO SQUADRON OR WARRIOR WOMAN.
BUT I NOTE A NAME THAT COMES UP IN CORRESPONDENCE FROM KANE
...INQUIRIES ABOUT A TRUCK DRIVER INCONGRUOUS THAT KANE WOULD CARE.

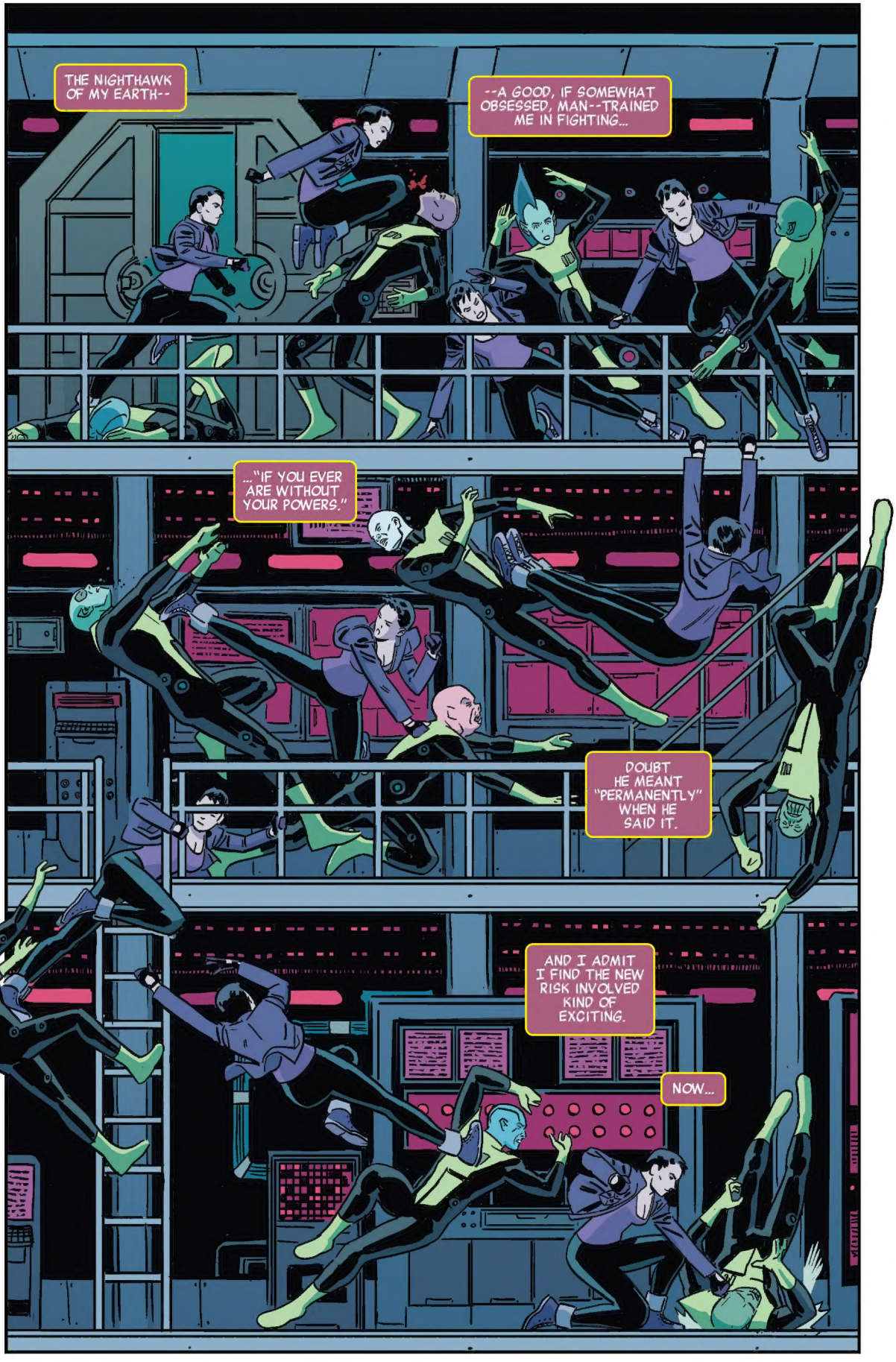

TRUCKER'S NAME GIVES HIM AWAY --WHO HE IS-- MARC MILTON. HYPERION.
WRACKING UP FAVORS OWED TO HELLSTROM

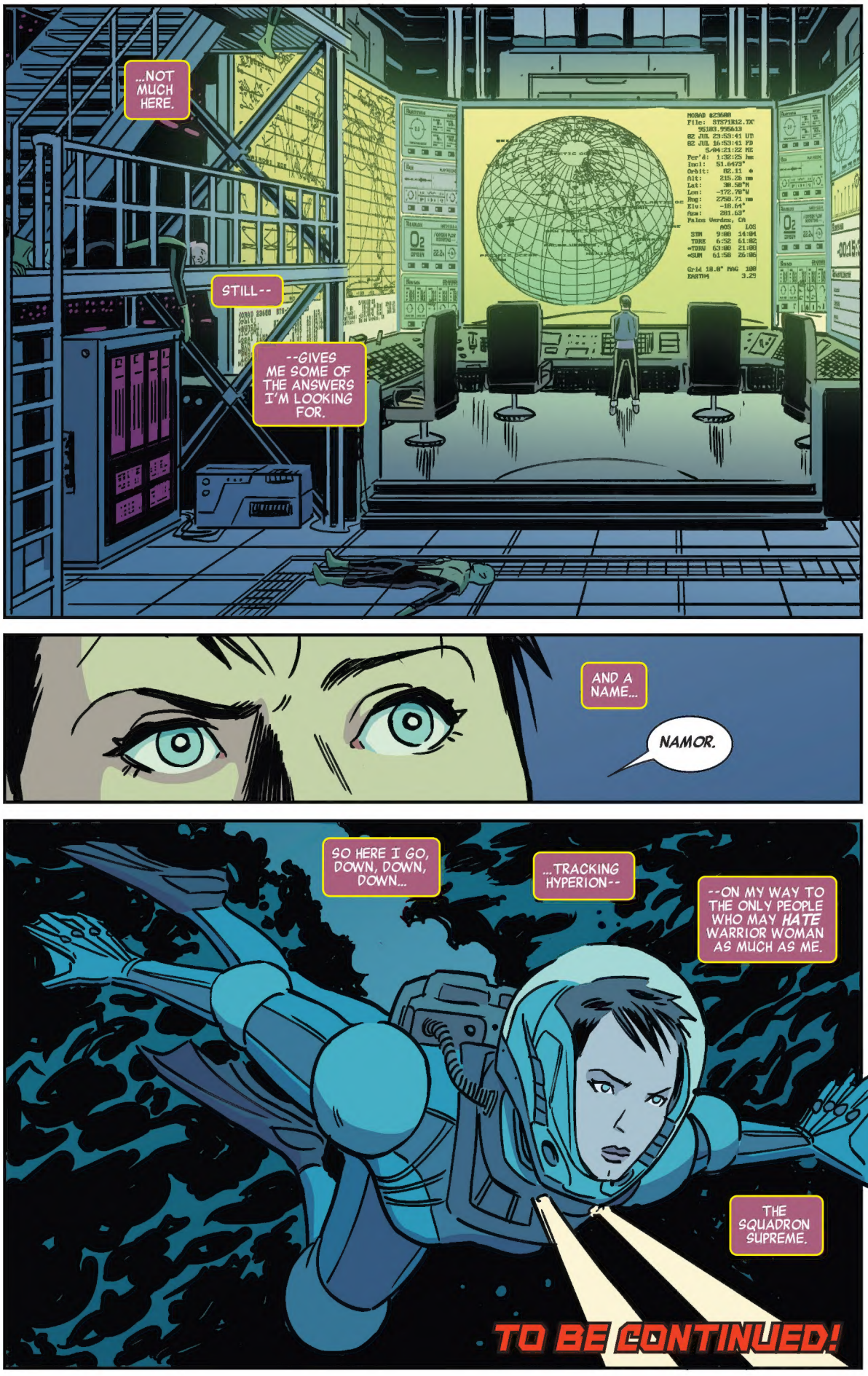

...HE PLANTS A "TRACKER" OF SOME ARCANE KIND


THEN WORD REACHES ME
...THE MYRIAD IS NO LONGER IN THE SHADOWS

THEY'VE ENTERED THE LIGHT.
UNTIL RECENTLY, THE MYRIAD WAS A SECRET CRIME CARTEL.
ZAP
COMPRISING SEVERAL THOUSAND DISENFRANCHISED ALIENS.

AN ARMY OF "GHOSTS" UNKNOWN TO THE WORLD.
UNTIL WARRIOR WOMAN MYSTERIOUSLY CHANGED ALL THAT--TOOK THEM OVER SOMEHOW. MADE THEM HER ARMY.
ZAP
AND THAT BRINGS ME HERE--ONE OF THE MYRIAD'S SKY BASES.
WITH A SKELETON CREW...
...SINCE THE BULK OF THEM RELOCATED TO *ALAMBRA*, THE COUNTRY CONQUERED AT THEIR "QUEEN'S" COMMAND AND MADE THEIR HOME.


THE NIGHTHAWK OF MY EARTH--
--A GOOD, IF SOMEWHAT OBSESSED, MAN--TRAINED ME IN FIGHTING...
..."IF YOU EVER ARE WITHOUT YOUR POWERS."
DOUBT HE MEANT "PERMANENTLY" WHEN HE SAID IT.
AND I ADMIT I FIND THE NEW RISK INVOLVED KIND OF EXCITING.
NOW...


...NOT MUCH HERE.
STILL--
--GIVES ME SOME OF THE ANSWERS I'M LOOKING FOR.
AND A NAME...
NAMOR.
SO HERE I GO, DOWN, DOWN, DOWN...
...TRACKING HYPERION--
--ON MY WAY TO THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO MAY HATE WARRIOR WOMAN AS MUCH AS ME.
THE SQUADRON SUPREME.
TO BE CONTINUED!

NEXT:

SQUADRON SUPREME 10